



# 1AD Today



United States Division-Center

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## 'Devil' paratroopers train for coming mass jump in Iraq

By Spc. Michael MacLeod

1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**CAMP RAMADI, Iraq** – “Black hat” instructors from the U.S. Army’s elite Advanced Airborne School refreshed the parachuting skills of paratroopers here Feb. 5 to prepare them for a tactical airborne exercise soon to follow.

Three jumpmaster instructors from the Fort Bragg parachuting school recently traveled to Camp Ramadi, where they taught a one-day basic airborne skills refresher course to paratroopers of 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division.

“You want to knock the dust off [airborne] skills and bring them to the level of proficiency where they need to be,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Shultz, air movement operations committee chief for the Advanced Airborne School and lead instructor conducting the training at Camp Ramadi.

“It’s a perishable skill, like marksmanship or physical training. It’s something you need to be on top of all the time,” he said.

Instructors led the paratroopers in a series of exercises, simulating every movement that a paratrooper must make before, during and after a jump to exercise muscle memory, said Shultz.

Paratroopers practiced parachute landing falls – a way to safely roll when landing to dissipate the energy of impact. They also received a brief on how to exit the aircraft under various scenarios, and then practiced mass exiting from a training apparatus; designed to simulate a



Photo by Spc. Michael MacLeod, 1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**Dirt flies off a paratrooper's boots as he finishes a parachute landing fall with other paratroopers of 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, stationed at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, Feb. 5, 2010. The paratrooper's are participating in a basic airborne refresher course being taught by instructors visiting from Fort Bragg's Advanced Airborne School in preparation for airborne exercises later the same month.**

C-130 aircraft.

The last skill paratroopers reviewed was rigging their packs with a harness that allows them to lower their packs to the ground before they land, preventing injury and protecting equipment.

“To get these guys out here touching their equipment – rigging their stuff up, putting their parachute on – makes them feel like paratroopers again,” said Schultz. “They’re out here [in Iraq] doing different things.”

Sgt. Brandon Reynolds, a mortarman with 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, is looking forward to the jump. A paratrooper since 2006, Reynolds said he loves being a paratrooper with the 82nd because of the high standards of soldiering they uphold.

“It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity to

come out here and jump and show the Iraqis exactly what an airborne division can do,” he said.

The legacy unit of 1/82 AAB, 504th PIR, has five jumps into combat zones under its belt, including four during World War II and one into Panama in 1989.

If executed as planned, the 1/82 AAB training exercise could be the largest mass parachute jump into a combat zone since the paratroopers of 173rd Airborne Brigade dropped onto Bashur Airfield in northern Iraq March 26, 2003; a combat jump known as Operation Northern Delay.

According to the 173rd Web site, nearly 1,000 paratroopers took part in that operation. More than 500 devil paratroopers are expected to jump at this one.

# 1st Air Cav aviator reaches 2,700 combat hours in flight

By Sgt. Travis Zielinski

1st ACB, 1st CAV DIV, USD-C

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** – Ask Chief Warrant Officer 3 Anthony Potter what it takes to reach 2,000 combat flight hours and he'll tell you it requires the support of a loving family and fellow Soldiers.

Before being a senior in high school, the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter instructor pilot from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-Center, said he always knew that he wanted to fly; that he wanted to be a pilot.

So when it came time to choose a college, he made it abundantly clear aviation would be in his future.

After graduating from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University with a degree in aeronautical science, a prospective employer told the Waldorf, Md., native, he lacked maintenance experience required for the job. The comment later became the push which led Potter to the military.

Enlisting in the Army as an aircraft engine mechanic, Potter felt flying rather than fixing helicopters would be a better fit for him, so he decided to turn in a flight packet for warrant officer school.

Four deployments and 52 combat zone months later, Potter enjoys the recognition of having logged 2,000 flight hours in support of various operations in the Global War on Terrorism. To date, he actually has a total of 2,700 hours.

He sees the 2,000 hours as a symbol of not only the work he has done in Iraq, but the work done to protect his son from harm. Potter said it also symbolizes the special dates missed, to include anniversaries, birthdays and holidays, as well as his son growing up.

"I have not been home for Thanksgiving once in the last six years. I saw my son take his first steps via webcam: the



Photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., USD-C

**Chief Warrant Officer 3 Anthony Potter, from Waldorf, Md., a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter instructor pilot in Company C, 3rd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-Center, has spent 52 months and four Iraq deployments accumulating more than 2,000 hours of combat flight time.**

potty training – I didn't have any part of that," said Potter. "It is just the little things like that I have missed and I will never get back."

The support his wife has shown him over the years, though, has kept Potter at a point where he can focus on his mission at hand and not have to worry about affairs back home.

"She handles everything. She has basically been a single mom for the last four years – I have the best wife in the world," said Potter.

Having been away from home for the majority of his five-year-old son's life, Potter takes every opportunity to talk with him and hopes to never take those moments for granted.

"I call my wife every night; she tells me what is going on and how my son is doing and I talk to my son as much as I can so he gets to know me," said Potter.

Potter's first and second deployments were spent working as a medevac pilot, dealing with routine calls for patient transfers to urgent assistance of casualties resulting from a combat engagement.

"In the first nine months of being a deployed medevac pilot, my crew had done 189 urgent calls and transferred over 400 patients," said Potter. "I brought back seven dead Soldiers, and that sticks with me ... I can still see all of them."

Despite the hard memories, Potter still has solid reasons to enjoy flying in a combat zone as compared to flying in the United States.

"I actually like flying in Iraq better, other than the part of being shot at," he said. "To me, it is easier to fly out here; the flying is more tactical versus the technical flying in the States."

Now filling the role of an instructor pilot in an assault helicopter battalion on this deployment, Potter's duties include making sure the aviators within his company maintain their abilities to pilot a Black Hawk to the highest standards.

"My job is easy to help train these guys; they are better pilots than I was when I was at their level," said Potter. "My job is to make sure they take care of the mission, but they are the ones actually doing the mission."

Potter said the ability to help mentor younger pilots while being deployed, hopefully making them better and safer, may also allow him to move to different positions where he can spend more time with his family.

"I feel guilty about being gone for so long," said Potter. "I just want my son with me all the time when I am home." "My wife tells me I spoil our son, but I can't help it because I am gone so much."

Gone or not, Potter still has high hopes for his son, as do most fathers: "I can't wait until my son is old enough to reach the pedals so I can teach him how to fly."



# African-American History Month

## Ella Fitzgerald

**E**lla Jane Fitzgerald was born on April 25, 1917, in Newport News, Va. After a troubled childhood, including the death of her mother in 1932, Fitzgerald turned to singing and debuted at the Apollo Theater in 1934 at age 17.

She was discovered in an amateur contest in Harlem and joined Chick Webb's band and recorded several hits, notably "A-tisket A-tasket" (1938).

After Webb died in 1939, his band was renamed Ella Fitzgerald and her Famous Orchestra.

Two years later, she began her solo career and by the mid-1950s, she had become the first African-American to perform at the Mo-

cambo.

Her lucid intonation and broad range made her a top jazz singer. Her series of recordings for Verve (1955-9) in multi-volume "songbooks" are among the treasures of American popular song.

Fitzgerald is known as "The First Lady of Song," and

was the most popular American female jazz singer for over 50 years. In her lifetime, she won 13 Grammy awards and sold over 40 million albums.

With the exception of "Jazz at Santa Monica Civic '72", her latter recordings marked a decline in her voice due to complications from diabetes. The disease left her blind, and she

had both legs amputated in 1994.

She made her last recording in 1989 and her last public performance in 1991 at New York's Carnegie Hall. Fitzgerald died on June 15, 1996, in her Beverly Hills home.

Fitzgerald was briefly married to Benny Kornegay, a convicted drug dealer and hustler, in 1941. The marriage was annulled two years later.

She was married to bass player Ray Brown from 1947 to 1952; they adopted a child born to Fitzgerald's half-sister whom they christened Ray Brown, Jr. Fitzgerald.

*Information found at <http://www.biography.com/articles/Ella-Fitzgerald-9296210>*



## Camp Liberty MWR Calendar

Calendar events start at 2000

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Spades	Karaoke, Ping Pong	Salsa Night	Dominoes and R&B	Smooth Grooves
1900-2000 Marriage Enrichment Study: 7 Principles for Making a Marriage Work, at Building 1822				



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kristina Scott, 366th MPAD, USD-C

**Pfc. Shawn Runnels**, a tanker assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, takes aim at a member of the opposing team during a recreational day dodgeball game at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Feb. 5 marked the unit's 138th consecutive day "boots on round" in Iraq.

## Weather

Today	Tomorrow	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				
61° F   44° F	67° F   45° F	68° F   46° F	72° F   50° F	74° F   53° F



## Quote of the Day

"Stop looking for your purpose. *Be it.*"

**-Michele Reeds Adams-**

For more coverage of what USD-C Soldiers are doing, pick up a copy of the upcoming issue of *The Iron Guardian* in publication Feb.15.



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The 366th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/ 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division Public Affairs Office/ 16th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs Office/ 1st Brigade Combat Team-Augmented, 3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs Office/ and the 2nd Brigade, Combat Team 10th Mountain Division Public Affairs Office/ 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office

